



PLACER COUNTY
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EDWARD N. BONNER
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STEPHEN L. D'ARCY
UNDERSHERIFF

PRESS RELEASE

Date/Time of Release: **January 26, 2006 / 2 PM**
Date/Time of Occurrence: **January 24, 2006**
Nature of Call: **Identity Theft Ring Discovered**
Location of Call: **Placer and Yuba Counties**
Case Number:
Released by: **George Malim, Lieutenant 530-889-7862**

SHERIFF EDWARD N. BONNER RELEASES THE FOLLOWING:

Sheriff's detectives arrested two men believed to be involved in an identity theft ring. The case was first reported by the Yuba County Sheriff's Department and may reach as far as Southern California.

Tuesday, Placer County Sheriff Detectives received information from the Yuba County Sheriff's Department about a rise in credit card fraud in their jurisdiction. Their investigation determined that the victims' information had been compromised at a gas station in Yuba County. The suspects would use the information obtained to create counterfeit debit cards and withdraw money from automated teller machines. Many of these fraudulent transactions took place at Thunder Valley Casino in Placer County.



CLAUDIA HOTEA



**EMANUEL
MOLDOVEANU**

Armed with dates and times of the transactions at the casino, Placer County detectives, with the full cooperation of the casino's management, reviewed security videotape at the casino and identified a pattern. On Tuesday night, detectives identified one of the suspects seen on the security video enter the casino. The suspect, Claudia Hotea, 32, of Orange County, was arrested without incident. A second male associated with the Hotea, Emanuel Constantin Moldoveanu, 34, of Sacramento was also taken into custody.

The suspects were found to be in possession of five fraudulent cards. Further investigation has determined that at least one gas station in Placer County has been compromised in the same manner as the station in Yuba County. Five victims have been identified so far and it is anticipated that the victim count will grow.

Both suspects are currently in custody in the Placer County Jail and are charged with burglary, conspiracy and possession of forged access cards. Their bail is set at \$250,000.

Copies of this press release are available on the Placer County Sheriff's Department website at <http://www.placer.ca.gov/sheriff>